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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 EB-11 AID-20 /125 W
---------- 034936
R 211015Z JAN 74
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 491
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 0734

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 1165-, GDS
TAGS: RP, JA, PINT, PFOR
SUBJECT: TANAKA VISIT - POLITICAL ASPECTS

REF: (A) MANILA 287; (B) MANILA 622

SUMMARY. TANAKA'S VISIT TO MANILA PROVIDED TIMELY AND IMPORTANT ENDORSEMENT OF NEW SOCIETY AND KICKED OFF SERIES OF HIGH LEVEL VISITS WITH INTER ALIA AN EYE TO DEMONSTRATING REGIME'S ACCEPTANCE BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. ALTHOUGH RATIFICATION OF JAPAN-PHILIPPINES TREATY WITHOUT NEW DEBATE HAS PROVOKED SUBDUED NATIONALIST CRITICISM, REACTION TO TANAKA VISIT IS PROBABLY OF LOWER INTENSITY THAN IN OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIA COUNTRIES. TREATY HAS ALSO PUT BILATERAL RELATIONS ON GOOD FOOTING AND LED TO EXPECTATIONS OF FURTHER ASSISTANCE. ASEAN EMBASSIES HERE SOMEWHAT CRITICAL OF PHILIPPINE WELCOME BUT THIS FEELING NOT LIKELY TO CONCERN GOP SO LONG AS JAPAN FOLLOWS THROUGH. END SUMMARY
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1. PRINCIPAL POLITICAL FEATURE OF TANAKA VISIT WAS FACT,
AS MARCOS SAID ON TANAKA'S ARRIVAL, THAT HE HAD COME.
TANAKA THEREBY CONTRIBUTED IMPLICIT, AND LATER EXPLICIT,
ENDORSEMENT OF MARCOS' LEADERSHIP AND GAVE PRESTIGIOUS
START TO SERIES OF STATE VISITS IN NEXT FEW MONTHS THAT
DFA SECRETARY ROMULO HAS ASSERTED REFLECT GOP'S NEW
IMAGE AND STANDING IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FOLLOWING
INSTALLATION OF NEW SOCIETY. VISIT ALSO PROVIDED OPPOR-
TUNITY FOR TWO LEADERS TO TAKE MEASURE OF EACH OTHER, A
FACTOR GOP WILL NO DOUBT ATTEMPT TO BUILD ON IN FUTURE.
DFA SOURCE INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT UND ROMULO FAVORABLY
IMPRESSED BY FORCEFUL AND DIRECT MANNER OF TANAKA IN
CONTRAST TO TRADITIONAL IMAGE OF DEVIOUS JAPANESE.

2. VISIT FACILITATED BY RATIFICATION BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE
DECEMBER 21 (SHORTLY BEFORE THEORETICAL EXPIRATION OF PRESIDENTIAL
TERM UNDER 1935 CONSTITUTION OF PHILIPPINE-JAPANESE TREATY
OF AMITY, COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION (MANILA 14348). SOME
MID-LEVEL GOP OFFICIALS WHO OPPOSED TREATY ALLEGE RATIFI-
CATION WAS SINE QUA NON FOR INCLUSION MANILA IN ITINERARY.
ALTHOUGH RATIFIED BY JAPANESE IN 1961, TREATY HAD BEEN
MOVED FROM ONE PIGEON HOLE TO ANOTHER BY PHILIPPINE CON-
GRESS REFLECTING BOTH INDIVIDUAL AVARICE AND GENERAL CON-
CERN THAT TREATY WOULD FACILITATE JAPANESE OPPORTUNITY TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PHILIPPINES. TREATY FINALLY SHELVED BY
SENATE COMMITTEE IN 1971, A MOVE MANY FILIPINOS INTER-
PRETED AT TIME AS LAST THAT WOULD BE HEARD ON SUBJECT.

3. RATIFICATION OF TREATY IN ACCORD WITH PROCEDURES RECENTLY
USED TO DEAL WITH OTHER, LESS CONTROVERSIAL MATTERS, HAS
STARTLED AND
UPSET OFFICIALS IN DFA AND SUCH GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES AS NEDA. IT ALSO HAS REVIVED WIDESPREAD MISGIVINGS
AMONG BROADER FILIPINO COMMUNITY. MISGIVINGS NOT APPARENTLY
BASED ON FAREFUL OR EVEN RECENT READING OF TREATY PROVISIONS
(ALTHOUGH MFN PROVISIONS WIDELY SUSPECTED ALMOST
ENTIRELY DUE TO IGNORANCE AND TENDENCY TO EXPECT THE WORSE
AS CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF BIG POWER EXPLOITING LITTLE POWER)
YET ARE NEVERTHELESS REAL. IN QUIET MANNER DICTATED BY
MARTIAL LAW REGIME, STUDENTS AND OTHERS OF LIBERAL,
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NATIONALIST OR OPPORTUNIST BENT HAVE INDICATED DIS-
SATISFACTION. FORMER SENATOR SALONGA HAS POINTED UP
DISSATISFACTION IN LETTER HE PURPORTEDLY SENT TO ROMULO
UNDER NOM DE PLUME WHICH IS NOW CIRCULATING IN UNDER-
GROUND PRESS. HOWEVER GENUINE THESE CONCERNS WITH TREATY
OR JAPANESE INCURSION THAT IT REPRESENTS, WE DO NOT THINK
THESE FEELINGS RUN NEARLY SO DEEP OR SO INTENSELY AS
THEY APPARENTLY DO IN THAILAND AND INDONESIA. NEVERTHELESS

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TREATY RATIFICATION DOES COUNT AS ONE MORE MARK AGAINST
MARCOS AMONG FAIRLY BROAD GROUP OF FILIPINO NATIONALISTS.

4. TREATY DOES NOT EXPAND AREAS OPEN TO JAPANESE FIRMS
IN PHILIPPINES OR OTHERWISE INTEND TO ENHANCE THEIR
POSITION, BUT IT DOES REGULARIZE THEIR STATUS. IT
ALSO REGULARIZES ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES AND REMOVES POINT OF IRRITATION BETWEEN GOP
AND MAJOR ECONOMIC POWER IN REGION UPON WHOM GOP COUNTS
FOR CONSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE. ON THESE GROUNDS ALONE,
ASIDE FROM ANY ROLE IT MAY HAVE HAD IN INDUCING TANAKA
TO VISIT, RATIFICATION OF TREATY UNDOUBTEDLY
CONSIDEREBYDESIRABLE BY PRESIDENT JWD SENIOR GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS AND OUTWEIGHS DISSATISFACTION THAT RATIFICATION
HAS STIRRED UP. VISIT DID PROVIDE SOME IMMEDIATE BENEFITS
AND MAY CLEAR WAY FOR MORE JAPANESE ASSISTANCE IN FUTURE
(REF B).

5. ASIDE FROM DOMESTIC PROS AND CONS OF RATIFYING
TREATY, IT MAY HAVE SOME INTERESTING RAMIFICATIONS FOR
ASEAN. WE ASSUME GOP WOULD EXPECT THAT
TREATY RATIFICATION AND GRACIOUSNESS OF RECEP-
TION PROVIDED TANAKA WOULD ESTABLISH TRADITIONAL DEBT
OF GRATITUDE IN JAPAN, AND ENHANCE JAPANESE
RESPECT FOR PHILIPPINE STABILITY. ON OTHER HAND WE
SENSE AMONG SOME ASEAN EMBASSIES HERE FEELING THAT
PHILIPPINES MAYHAVE BEEN UNDULY HASTY AND DEFERENTIAL
TOWARDS JAPANESE. WHILE GOP HAS SHOWN INCREASED INTEREST
IN ASEAN DURING TANAKA AND LEE KUAN YEW VISITS, WE DOUBT
GOP OVERLY CONCERNED WITH BEING SLIGHTLY OUT OF STEP WITH ASEAN
NEIGHBORS. DFA HAS RECEIVED REPORT FROM TOKYO THAT GOJ PLAN-
NING POLICY CHANGE FOR SOUTHEASTASIA AND GOP COUNTING
ON BENEFITING FROM CHANGE AS WELL AS OR BETTER THAN
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OTHER ASEAN MEMBERS
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